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EFFECTIVE PREACHERS

Keeping Our Morale As Christians

BY HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

OUR temptation in times like these is not simply to lose our morale personally, to become disorganized as individuals, but to lose our morale as Christians. In an old theological volume, the Table of Contents starts like this: "Chapter One, Hell; Chapter Two, Hell Continued." Two world wars in one lifetime, hell and hell continued, are a strain, not simply on personal stamina but on one's confidence in the whole ideal realm of Christian faith and ethics—lovely and alluring, but looking dreadfully irrelevant to the appalling facts that face the world today.

One of Canada's most trusted leaders said recently, "Difficult though it may be we must turn this country into a nation of killers." That kind of thing a large part of mankind is confronting now. What relevance has Christ's way of thought and life to such a world? "God is love," "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him," "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin," "Be not anxious," "Love your enemies," "Love never faileth"—does not all that sound like other-worldly poetry in an era that must deal with dreadfully literal prose?

Many of us, in our youth, were disturbed about Christianity's credibility. Could we intellectually believe it? Now, however, the scene has shifted. The towering question today is not Christianity's intellectual credibility but its practical relevance. What on earth has that lovely character of Christ, with his idyllic trust in a heavenly Father and his romantic confidence in boundless good will, to do with this bloody world, where we use our mastery of the skies to make children live underground, starve whole populations with our blockades, destroy the hard-won gains of liberty, and turn the whole earth into a vast battlefield?

Nevertheless, concerning the organization of the

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world on Christian principles, one of our well known sociologists writes this: "It is only such a world which will be found practicable in the long run if men are to live together. . . . *We must have a Christian world, or we shall have social chaos.*" If we could see the truth in that today, some of us might still sustain, even amid these terrific world events, an undefeated Christian morale.

Long ago, we read in John's Gospel, Jesus' first followers began deserting him. They too lived in a realistic world dominated by force, ruled by tyranny, bitter with hate. He was too ethereal for them. But some of the disciples made history that day when Jesus asked them, "Would ye also go away?" and they answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." The phrase "eternal life" in John's Gospel never means simply the future world. Always, "eternal life" means a quality of life beginning here and now on earth, so rich that it is worth while going on with forever. What those disciples said to Christ was, in effect, We too are tempted to turn away from you, but whither? If we want an abiding, a durable, worth-while life here or anywhere, to whom shall we go?

What about that? If we do want a durable, worthwhile life for ourselves and for our children, where else shall we go?

I

As we face this issue, consider first that Christ and the great tradition of Christianity are not by any means so romantic, soft and irrelevant to realistic fact as our popular rendition of them has commonly made out. How can one look at this present world situation and not see exhibited in awful clearness two major Christian affirmations? One, the reality of a moral order here that inflexibly brings to men and nations the harvest of what they sow. The other, the reality of human sin as a diabolical fact that can twist to evil uses every good we seem to gain, and from which we desperately need to be saved. God as moral order, where what we sow we reap, and man as sinner, ruining the fair chances of his world unless he is inwardly transformed —that is not sweet and romantic; that is the most realistic view of life mankind ever faced, and it is at the heart of the New Testament.

The real reason why Christianity seems to many an idealistic irrelevance, is not that it really is so, but that we ourselves have abstracted from the New Testament its sweeter aspects because we like them, and have forgotten the profound depths of sometimes terrifying realism there.

Then, in an era of public catastrophe, like our own, we say, What romantic poetry Jesus' faith in a heavenly Father is! But consider! Henry Ward Beecher once pictured a Brooklyn policeman, who was the dread of the criminal elements in his precinct, going home at night, and lo! with shouts of welcome his children ran out to greet him, clambered all over him, and even looked for candy in his pockets. And, said Beecher in effect, God is like that—you can have him either way—that's up to you; he waits to be a father; he wants to be a father; that is the end and aim of his being, but he is also the representative of moral order—take your choice.

The first corollary to be drawn from the existence of God is not sweet and idyllic but serious. If God is, the first corollary is that this is a moral order. When, therefore, people look at the suicidal world today and say, This disproves the existence of God, that sounds to me exactly as if, seeing a man walk out a sixth story window and fall to his death, we said, That disproves the law of gravitation. Upon the contrary, it proves that there is a law of gravitation. So if the nations of this world could have done what they have done these last twenty-five years, breaking every law of mutuality and interdependent living, and could have got away with it scatheless, without a catastrophe that would shake the earth to its foundations, then there would have been no moral order and no God. We chose God the policeman and we have got him. That teaching, profoundly stern and realistic, is at the heart of the New Testament.

As for human nature, where did we get the idea that Christianity is sweet and idyllic about that, as though it taught that man is a lovely being, to be seen through rose spectacles? Read what the New Testament really says about man: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, whisperers, back-biters, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventers of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful"—that is man as the Letter to the Romans describes him.

It is not Christianity that is Utopian; it is much of our superficial secular modernism that has been Utopian, saying, in effect: All we need is more science, mastering wider areas of cosmic power, more secular education so that illiteracy will be banished, and more economic prosperity so that our material welfare will be secure; give us more such gains and we shall be saved. Well, here we are, with more scientific powers than our fathers ever dreamed, more secular education than any generation ever possessed, a higher standard of material living than even fifty years go was imaginable. Here we are, in the most appalling situation the race ever faced, running headlong into something that Christianity has always said: What shall it profit to gain the whole world and lose the soul? Every falling bomb and rumbling tank says that every starving child, failing business, heartbroken home, every closer step we take here toward war—they all are preaching Christianity today, if we but understood, as though to say, Accumulate your science, your secular education, your economic prosperity—all that is excellent; it is in Christendom that these things have mainly flourished—but this world is so unescapably a moral order, and everything we human beings gain so inevitably depends for its effect upon the quality of soul that uses it, that nothing can save us without someone who can save us from our sin.

Well, I propose to stand by Christianity a while longer. At any rate, far from being romantic, it pre-

sents the most realistic view of human life up to date. And if someone says, I'm giving it up, I ask, To whom, then, shall you go—to whom?

II

With this for a start, let us go deeper and face another central affirmation of Christianity—that every human personality is sacred, and that therefore no personality and no race or nation of personalities may be shut out from the one human family under the one God. Surely no intelligent person can say that that is irrelevant today.

What wilder exhibition of unbridled idealism can

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you find in history than the early Christian dream of one human family? How could fantastic imagination go madder than by envisioning this world as one community? But see what has happened—not from the pressure of the idealists, but from the practical exigencies and actualities of the world's realism! For man's new science, creating inter-communications, has long been saying, You are getting together—you had better recognize it. Man's economic life is crying, Get together, or you will starve! Man's concern for physical health is crying, Get together—epidemics know no boundaries! Man's scientific research is saying, Get together—all great discoveries are now international. And now a catastrophe of unparalleled proportion is, as it were, also preaching Christianity, crying, Get together into a decent human family or you all are lost!

When, therefore, people talk about the Christian gospel as an impractical irrelevance, I for one answer: About the most idealistic element in Christianity, the essential unity of the human family, is being backed up, confirmed and urged upon us by the most realistic interests of our daily lives. What if that sociologist were right—a Christian world is the only world which will be found practicable in the long run!

Many today think of Jesus' kindly ministry to individuals as idyllic and sweet, but not tied in with the great issues of the world. Blind Bartimaeus crying from the roadside, little children brought to him to bless, a woman of Samaria in her need, the poor and sick who crowded round him as the sun set over Galilee—how lovely of him to help them all, people think. But that was not merely lovely! He was at work there on an idea that today is the greatest single barricade against the triumph of the tyrants—every personality sacred. Do not call that irrelevant!

Lord Wolverhampton had a brilliant daughter who said once, "Father always let us have *his* own way." Whole nations now are saying that about their dictators. But something in our spiritual tradition cannot endure that, and traced back to its source, it springs from a profoundly religious idea—every personality is sacred, and the purpose of all government is to furnish a setting where personality can be fulfilled. The state was made for man, not man for the state. If we believe that, let us not call Christ irrelevant!

In the daily papers we hear continually about the clash of armies, but today in the church we face the clash of philosophies. On the one side is Nietzscheanism. This world, it says in effect, belongs to the strong; might is right; Christianity, with its ideal of care for the weak, is a delusion, concocted by the weak to prevent the strong from the rightful use of their strength for themselves; let the weak serve the strong; let them be fertilizer, even, to make rich the soil out of which the superman and the super-race can grow; as for Christianity, says Nietzsche, it is "the one great curse, the one enormous and innermost perversion, . . . the one immortal blemish of mankind."

Today Nietzscheanism has become incarnate; we can see it, and over against it stands the Christian philosophy that Nietzsche rightly recognized as his chief antagonist. God forgive us, we are unworthy to represent it! Too much Nietzscheanism is among us also. But if ever we believed even a little in Christ's way of thought and life—every personality sacred, and so all of us members alike of one human family—we had better believe in it now. The alternative is too terribly obvious. To whom else shall we go?

III

Consider now another element in Christianity, the supreme allegiance of the soul to God, above every human loyalty. To be sure, that is not Christianity's monopoly; all great religions teach it—Judaism obviously. Socrates said to his judges: "Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you." That attitude Christ took in earnest, practiced it on Calvary, and sent out those first humble disciples of his, saying, like Peter and the Apostles to the council: We must obey God rather than men. Christianity —idyllic, sweet, romantic? Not if we are thinking of the New Testament, with the cross at the center, and on it one who said, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

Surely no one can say that this profound factor in great religion is irrelevant now, for democracy itself sprang from it, and today the difference between dictatorship and democracy is, in a sense, located at this vital center. Dictatorship allows no higher loyalty than the state. Says Hitler, "We do not want any other God than Germany." But democracy speaks another language altogether, as in the words of Charles E. Hughes, when he was Chief Justice: "In the forum of conscience duty to a moral power higher than the State has always been maintained." That is an essential element in democracy.

In the United States we have tried to implement this by the separation of church and state, and the freeing of the church, as a spiritual body, from the control of the state. This explains the recent furor over a "canned" sermon, sent out by a department of the government, to be preached in all churches and synagogues of this nation. Now that the first heat of emotion is over, let us give that incident a brief, calm appraisal. For the first time in the history of the United States, so far as record is available, the ministers of religion in this country were supposed to preach a sermon prepared by the government. The trouble with that is not that the men who were responsible for the blunder meant anything totalitarian and dictatorial; their intentions were undoubtedly of the best. Nor does the trouble lie in the quality of the proposed sermon, for it was very good. The trouble lies in the un-American principle of the thing. As Lincoln said during the Civil War: "The United States Government must not undertake to run the churches," and if preparing sermons for us to preach is not running the churches at their vital center, what is? Personally, I think that this incident will prove to be only a tempest in a teapot; I expect no repetition of this foolish blunder.

But if there is any doubt about that, let the government take notice that the spirit of American democracy is still alive in our churches and synagogues, and that no doubt at all exists as to what the whole tradition of American democracy says on this matter: *It is not the business of the government to write sermons for the churches.*

In our day, however, the real exhibitions of this aspect of Christianity have been given not here, for we have not been put to the test, but in Germany. There one area of public life after another surrendered to the führer. The politicians, the universities, the labor unions, the great industrialists, they all caved in, and the only protesting area left was in the church—in men like Niemöller and his colleagues of the Lutheran faith, and now in the Dean of Berlin's Roman Catholic Cathedral. And the reason for this incorrigible unwillingness of religion at its best to haul down its flag, lies in an essential element of Christianity: There is for every human soul a higher loyalty than any human allegiance, and when the pinch comes, we must obey God rather than man.

Well, if we want real democracy, we had better stand by Christianity a little while longer. For it is needed. As was said of the old Calvinists, "They feared God so much that they did not fear anybody else at all."

IV

Finally, consider an element in Christianity that to many seems the fatal idealism of the gospel. I mean Jesus' confidence in endless, undiscourageable good will. That was sweet of him, some people think, to trust good will like that, so that he loved even his enemies. But look again at this world and see! No more imperative, realistic fact confronts us now than that in the long run the only creative, constructive force in life is intelligent good will.

In saying this, I want to include all of us. Some of us here are interventionists, some non-interventionists, some pacifists, some non-pacifists. Forget now these natural and justifiable differences of opinion. What we are saying takes us all in, regardless of our various convictions over immediate political procedure and strategy. In the long run only intelligent good will builds anything.

No one of us can think of war itself as creative. Listen to Miss Dorothy Thompson: "War has become a greater menace than any enemy can possibly be, and the first call upon our patriotism is to defend ourselves against war itself. . . . If I had children I would tell them just one thing about the last war, and I would tell it to them over and over again: *No nation won it. Every one lost it. And from now on all great wars will always be lost by all the combatants.*" To be sure, Miss Thompson said that during the reaction after the last war, when everybody was saying it, but remember! Miss Thompson will probably be saying that again after this war, and so will all of us. War, even when it assumes the appalling guise of necessity, is in itself the acme of destructiveness, and cannot be thought of as creative. It is only intelligent good will that can build.

Was Abraham Lincoln merely soft and sweet? At the height of the Civil War, when feeling was bitterest, he dropped, one day, at a White House reception, a kindly remark about the South, and an elderly woman flared up at him and wanted to know how he could speak kindly of his enemies, when he should wish above all else to destroy them. And the record runs that Lincoln gazed into her face and said slowly: "What, madam? do I not destroy them when I make them my friends?" Whatever we may think of the immediate necessities of action, that outlook of Lincoln is the long view. No crushing of a nation, however much its leadership needs to be eliminated, constructively solves any problem. Only the saving of the nations, the transformation of them from enmity to friendship, the incorporation of them, at last, in the human family—only that is intelligent and creative realism.

My friends, in these days of war's bitterness, never forget that unless we keep that attitude and spirit clear, the very winning of the war itself will be in vain. For one of the most dreadful things about war is this combination of the appalling sacrifices that it costs with the appalling meagerness and transiency of its desired

results, if all we do is to win the war. Lloyd George said of the Paris Conference at the close of the last war: "That conference will settle the destiny of nations and the course of human life for God knows how many ages." So! What did it settle for even twenty-five years?

Well, we had better stand by Christianity for a while longer. We are terribly tempted to call it impractical. But do we mean that what is going on in this unchristian world now is practical—economically practical, practical for our children's future? In the long run it will be found out that no other world except a Christian world is practicable. Ah, Lord, once more thou art saying to thy people, Will ye also go away? and we would answer thee now, To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

Can Human Beings Be Made Over?

By Ernest Fremont Tittle

How can a man be born when he is old? John 3:4.

THE importance of this question is now being recognized, even by some who but recently were inclined to regard any discussion of personal salvation as an intellectual affront. It is quite clear that human society requires to be made over. A society that makes for large-scale unemployment, for bitter want in the midst of possible abundance, for destructive conflict between classes and between nations, for two world wars in one generation, undoubtedly requires to be made over. It is also clear that the conditions of the world are likely to remain pretty much as they now are, unless human beings can be made over.

I

The first attempt in history to organize the world for peace ended in failure. The League of Nations was the embodiment of a great idea and hope. It might have been used to revise unworkable treaties and to remedy conditions that were making for war. It might have been used to secure orderly change, by peaceful means, whenever change was called for by the necessities of men. Instead, it was used by its dominant members to maintain a status quo which they believed to be in their own interest. The League of Nations failed to realize its intention through lack of vision and of moral character in those who were intrusted with its operation. Moreover, it would be unfair and ridiculous to hold its personnel solely responsible for what happened. For they, after all, but reflected the desires and ambitions of multitudes of men, who almost certainly would have demanded their resignation and recall had they faithfully undertaken to place the welfare of humanity as a whole above the particular advantage of their own nation.

The disaster which has come upon us was not, I feel bound to suppose, deliberately willed by any man or group of men, living or dead. Total war is the result of innumerable decisions and acts of innumerable individuals, who did not set out to create hell on earth but only to realize a selfish ambition. Can human beings be made over so that they will desire not only peace but also "the things which belong unto peace"—mercy, reconciliation, equal opportunity, freedom, and cooperation for the good of all?

This, for many of us, has become an intimately personal question. We are not satisfied, we are profoundly dissatisfied, with ourselves. "Suppose some evening you were able to make a superbroadcast to 130 million Americans, what would you say?" This question was put to Mr. Bertrand Russell, whose reply, published in a recent issue of the *Readers' Digest,* boils down to this: Today's world is full of painful things. But do not give up hope or say, "What can one man do against the world?" The world is what we make it, and to the making of it each one of us can contribute something, however little.

This, according to the editors of the *Digest,* is Mr. Russell's "inspired message." But though it may be inspired (a word which has more than one connotation), it is hardly inspiring. To be sure, the world is what we make it. But there is small comfort in that for those of us who, thanks to our egoism and selfishness, are making it what it is. To the making of the world we can indeed contribute something, each one of us. In fact, we cannot help contributing something every day of our lives. But what comfort is there in that for those of us who feel bound to suppose that, so far from adding something of real value, we are merely contributing to the problem which the world has to solve?

II

How can a man be born when he is old? Yesterday, there were those whose belief in God had grown dim or vanished altogether but whose confidence in man was unshaken. In fact, they had no doubt of man's ability to solve his problems by his own efforts alone. He had come far from the stage that was reached by his lowly ancestors and there was no reason to suppose that his progress would be halted. Having solved the problem of production, he would seek and find a solution of the problem of distribution. He would develop a rational economy based upon intelligent planning and cooperation for the good of all. He would conquer poverty and end war. He would rid himself of diseases of the body and disorders of the mind. By rigorous self-discipline and by increasing mastery of his glands, he would even rid himself of such moral ills as laziness, cowardice, jealousy and hate. Relying on his own wisdom and strength, he would build on earth that heavenly city which his fathers looked for in "a compensatory world beyond." But this confident expectation of human triumph was not destined to be realized. We have lived to see a world-wide economic debacle, the spread of totalitarianism, the revival of cruelty, the persecution of minorities, a second world war, and the march of humanity to the edge of an abyss into which we do not dare to look. Man's inability to save

himself by his own efforts alone is being demonstrated by events.

Can God save us, in the sense of making us over into different and better men? Christianity, down the centuries, has proclaimed the grace of God. But Christians have not always agreed among themselves, nor are they now agreed, as to what the grace of God means and does. The point on which they have divided is the question we now have before us: Can human beings, in this world, be made over? Is the grace of God a divine power by which men are radically transformed; or is it only a divine mercy by which men, if they are truly penitent, are pardoned?

In some of the churches of continental Europe there has long been a tendency to think of the grace of God solely in terms of a divine mercy by which the penitent are pardoned but not radically transformed. In these churches the emphasis has been upon quietism and otherworldly hopes. Naturally! They who believe that men cannot be made over even by the grace of God are, of course, inclined to believe that any hope of improved conditions on earth is a utopian illusion. They who are convinced that human nature cannot be changed are bound to suppose that injustice, oppression and open conflict between classes and between nations will probably be, to the end of history, a recurrent experience of the human race. On this view, it may seem futile to try to change and improve the conditions of the world; it may seem wise to place the emphasis upon otherworldly hopes and upon the possibility of a present fellowship with God in which man, though he remains a sinner, may, if he is truly penitent, transcend the disappointments and frustrations and tragedies of an earthly existence and have some experience of a heavenly bliss.

Today, this European view of the grace of God is entering the United States and is being presented to American churches by brilliant and influential voices. In this country, however, the resultant emphasis is somewhat different. There is the same belief in the corruption and impotence of human nature. There is the same doubt that the human heart can be radically transformed. There is the same insistence that the Kingdom of God cannot come on earth. But the American temperament is not conducive to quietism, nor is it content with merely otherworldly hopes. Hence it is being said by some among us who hold this European view of divine grace that, though the Kingdom of God can never come on earth, "some of the chaos of human existence can be overcome." And it is being said that we are bound to offer resistance to outrageous tyranny and brutality, using such weapons as we, being sinful men, are able to use. Even organized deception, indiscriminate killing and mass destruction? Yes, if necessary, even the weapons of total war; for, thanks to the corruption of human nature by pride and self-centeredness, we cannot use, in the relations of nations or of economic groups, the weapons of love. The ethical teaching of Jesus, though it is relevant to every human situation, is not a way of life in this world. It may serve as a standard by which every human policy and practice requires to be judged. It may serve as a principle of choice between evils and between partial goods. It may keep alive in men an uneasy conscience; it may compel them to acknowledge their incapacity and sinfulness; it may lead them to appeal to the mercy of God. But it may not, in the political and economic spheres, be a way of life.

III

It is, however, a basic affirmation of Christian faith that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." And multitudes of Christians have believed that the grace of God is not only a mercy that pardons but a power that transforms. In contradistinction to

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a theology that placed stress solely upon the idea of "justification," John Wesley also stressed the idea of "sanctification." He refused to believe that the most we can hope for is a divine mercy that takes the will for the deed and treats men as if they were righteous although, in fact, they are not righteous. He dared to believe that there is at work in the world a transcendent love and power that is able to help men to become righteous. "I know no salvation," he declared, "which is not salvation from sin." Quoting the New Testament, he said: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and *to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" He said this to the riff-raff of London and to a degraded and hopeless proletariat in mill towns and mining towns. And people listened to him, growing numbers of people. In open fields and natural amphitheaters, he preached to crowds numbering five, ten, even thirty thousand persons. He preached to miners who had just come out of the pits, both men and women. And as he looked upon their

upturned and eager faces, black from coal dust, he saw white streaks made by their tears.

What was Wesley's secret? He was almost totally lacking in the gifts of the popular orator. One of his biographers writes: "He had little imagination and no descriptive power. He told no anecdotes, as a rule, and certainly fired off no jests." Moreover, he had the cultivated Englishman's distaste for any display of emotion. Why was he listened to as was no other man of his time? The answer is clear and quite simple; he had good news for the poor—and for the rich; for all, in fact, who longed for salvation from sin.

Wesley had the courage to put his conviction to the test. And he saw human beings changed beyond all resemblance to their former selves. He saw the hopeless gain hope, the selfish become unselfish, the unclean become clean, and the brutal become kind. Nor was it only in the lives of individuals that dramatic changes occurred. Thanks to moral and spiritual forces which God through Wesley and his devoted followers released among men, social conditions were improved. "The Methodists themselves," writes the English historian, John Richard Green, "were the least result of the Methodist revival. . . . In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature, ever since the Restoration. A yet nobler result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor. . . . A passionate impulse of human sympathy with the wronged and afflicted raised hospitals, endowed charities, built churches, sent missionaries to the heathen, supported Burke in his plea for the Hindoo, and Clarkson and Wilberforce in their crusade against the iniquity of the slave trade."

The Evangelical Revival did indeed produce notable results in history. And it is significant that its leaders, so far from bringing out some new idea, merely regained and restated the basic conviction of Christian faith that God through Jesus Christ entered into history with saving power.

Christianity came to the world as a gospel. What was this good news which stirred the ancient world as it had never been stirred before? Was it the ethical teaching of Jesus as given in the Sermon on the Mount that brought into the world a new hope and expectation? Certainly not. It is not "good news" that it is required of men to live by the ethical teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. It is *true* news, as growing numbers of persons are coming to believe, seeing that man's attempt to live in defiance of the righteousness of God revealed in Christ has issued in overwhelming disaster. It is true news that men are called to live by the law of love, and not by the law of the jungle. But it is not good news for men who, though they see that love is the law of life, whose violation inevitably brings death and destruction, have no confidence that human beings can live by the law of love.

The good news which Christianity brought to the world was the proclamation of God's marvelous action for the salvation of men. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." He was delivering men from pride and self-centeredness, from false ideas and standards of value, from desires and ambitions that make for death and destruction. He was lifting men up into a fellowship with himself through which they were radically transformed.

Human beings can, by the grace of God, be made over. That is good news. Is it not *the* news which the world now needs to have brought to it? We do not need to be told—we know—that our situation is now desperate. And growing numbers of us are beginning to suspect that we cannot save ourselves. What we need to be told is that God, if we will turn to him in penitence and trust, can save, not only in the sense of pardoning our offenses but even in the sense of creating within us a new mind and a new heart. We may not look for a perfect human society on earth. We may not look for a time when all men will be wise and good. But we may look for a world in which the multitude of men will be given a chance to realize the divine possibilities that are within them. We may look for a world in which the amazing productivity of science and technology will be geared to the satisfaction of human needs and not, as it now is, to the satisfaction of human pride and greed and love of power. We may look for a world so organized that the races and nations of men will not impoverish and degrade themselves in insane attempts to destroy one another but will peaceably dwell together on all the face of the earth.

Addressed to Youth

THERE was only one man who ever faced the knowledge that he was speaking to his followers for the last time who lived up to the possibilities of the situation. That man spoke in an upper room to a heterogeneous group more than nineteen hundred years ago and this is what he said: "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. This is my commandment: that ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

"Peace I leave with you." How much you and I need that gift today! The inward peace which makes us strong no matter how the storms rage without; a peace which the cynic, the pseudo-intellectual, the defeatist never know. Never did men facing the world need inward peace as much as at the present moment.

Today the thought that I would leave with you is not one of my own, for I am quite incapable of meeting the challenge. It is one that has persisted down through the centuries despite skepticisms and doubt and ridicule. It is one that gave inward peace to the Galilean as he faced his great trial. It is the thought of an all-wise God who controls the universe, who is an inseparable part of every human life, who is our strength in time of crisis. WILLIAM MATHER LEWIS.

Good and Bad Alike?

By George A. Buttrick

All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked. . . . Ecclesiastes 9:2.

IS there one event to good and bad? The writer plainly believes it ought not to be so: life ought somehow to honor goodness. But it is so: God apparently lacks moral sense or moral power, or both: "All things come alike to all." Therefore Ecclesiastes recommends that we meet life with an alien and cynical mind. Many folk are tempted nowadays to the same conclusion. Falling bombs and marching armies do not make detours round the homes of the virtuous: "there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked." By some deep protest of spirit we know it ought not to be so, but apparently it is so: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

I

If that conclusion prevails our journey will be from pessimism through bitterness to violence. In pessimism we shall say with Villiers that life is like a boresome play at which we remain only from politeness; or with a certain Greek professor, "I hate the world for its mystery." In bitterness we may quote Omar Khayyam:

> Oh Thou, Who man of baser Earth didst make
> And Who with Eden didst devise the Snake;
> For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
> Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give—and take!;

or cynically compare our human lot with the dilemma of the man in the old story. He ran from a wild beast to the refuge of a dried up well. But there was a dragon at the bottom of the well. So he clung to a branch midway—only to see that mice were gnawing through the branch. Then he could only comfort his brief moment of life by licking wild honey from a leaf, until life's cruelty should kill him. But we shall not be content with pessimism and bitterness: where everyone is clinging to the same branch we shall take to violence, not only to grab the fleeting joy but to ease the bitter protest of the soul. Beneath our wars is just that anger of outraged faith. Beneath all our present struggles is a nihilism, scientific or of some other kind, that wipes out worth in man and hope in God. But, even so, is it not true that there is "one event to all"?

II

There is an area of life where events are better for the righteous. The area has limits, as we shall confess, but it is still wide. Why, from the early days of Greek mythology until now, do we speak about Nemesis, that Goddess of Night who tracks down and punishes the proud? Or why do we write of Furies, who, in the judgment hall, according to that same mythology, kept rocks suspended ever above the alarmed heads of the defrauders, or forever snatched tempting foods from condemned lips? Why do we say that "chickens come home to roost," or that "murder will out"? These stories and proverbs have sprung from experience. There is an account of a lad whose mother sent him to buy twelve bananas. He was hungry and ate two on the way home, and then told his mother that the money she had given him would buy only ten. Months later at the movies he saw himself, on the screen, eating those two bananas. Some film company in search of local color had taken "shots" of that street at the very moment of his guilt. Poor lad! Why does the conviction persist that the picture is always taken, of every street and home and life, even though human eyes may never see it?

The bright reverse of this sense of a hidden justice also holds: "Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart." The words are not a pious mouthing: they are a verdict on life. We know that they are a true verdict. Any doctor could testify that a temperate man avoids events which a riotous man invites. A young farmer, delighting in the "good earth" and keeping troth with the seasons in his honest toil, is not likely to share "one event" with the city racketeer. The gentle St. Francis, coveting no possession beyond tunic and sandals and no fame except to be "God's poor little man," does not come under the same range of happening as the greedy barons of his time who made rapacious war. So, within certain limits, it is true to say that events are better for the righteous than for the wicked.

III

But honesty compels the admission that there is another wide area where *events are the same for the righteous as for the thug.* Nowhere is this seeming callousness of the scheme of things so starkly confessed as in the Bible. This text is evidence. The believer finds a certain grim solace of truth in the fact that the skeptic's railings are so much better done in the Scriptures. "Light *is* sown for the righteous," yet there is a broad realm in which the righteous are no better off, so far as the outer event is concerned, than the veriest scoundrel. The New England hurricane did not skip the kind-hearted, or spare even babes in arms. In the ancient story the plague passed by homes whose doors were marked with blood, but in our life death is no respecter of persons. When the railroads were first built in Korea, the ignorant natives, so a friend tells me, would lay their heads on the rail at night for coolness' sake, and would be decapitated. Their ignorance, for which they were not responsible, was their doom—good and bad alike. Evasion of that fact does not help us: it leads only to inward chaos.

Jesus once admitted the fact in as plain words as any skeptic. "For he [Jesus was speaking of God] maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." "Sun"—that word covers all bright experience: the wicked also have their prosperity. "Rain"—that word covers all sorrow and tragedy: the good also come under grievous calamity. Could any realism be more real? But—and this is the startling matter—whereas to Ecclesiastes this "one event" meant the divine callousness, to Jesus it meant the divine compassion. Jesus said so: "Bless them which curse you . . . that ye may be the children of

your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." That *is* a startling matter. Ecclesiastes said: "To good and bad alike: God must be callous." Jesus said, "To good and bad alike: God must be magnanimous." The same facts—and two diametrically opposite conclusions! How could that happen, and which conclusion is right?

"One event," said the old skeptic; but forgot that any event has two ends. An event is both the external happening *and* the inward response. Wind blowing over a stagnant marsh carries disease; the same wind blowing over a flower garden carries fragrance. "One

GEORGE A. BUTTRICK

event" becomes two completely different events because of what it finds. Wordsworth's Peter Bell saw a primrose, but

> A primrose by the river's brim
> A yellow primrose was to him,
> And it was nothing more.

Sydney Dobell saw a primrose, and wrote:

> First came the primrose
> On the bank high,
> Like a maiden looking forth
> From the window of a tower.

The "one event" is plainly two events by impact on two different minds. In short, there is always an inwardness to events. Water falling on molten metal makes it hard, and the same water falling on a wheatfield makes it fertile. Sorrow makes one man rebellious and another man gentle. Death on the Titanic made some men rush for the lifeboats whoever might be in the way or whoever might be left; but there were two other men, standing at the rail as the lifeboats pulled away, one of whom waved his hand gaily and said, "Give my love to the folks at home," and the other of whom said, pointing to his dinner jacket, "If we must visit Neptune it is better to go well dressed." Thus to some men death was a worse death, and to other men death was—what? Our souls would scorn us if we did not call it life. "One event"; but Ecclesiastes called it "sun" or "rain," while Jesus called it *"His* sun," *"His* rain." The "one event" is a hundred events to a hundred people. In strict truth the good man always makes his own good event.

IV

Dare you continue this strange progression? We said that there is a sense in which events are better for the righteous. Then we said that events are the same for the righteous yet with an inward difference. Dare you continue? This way: *events are worse for the righteous.* They are better too, for the wicked see the sunset without seeing it, while to the pure in heart a sunset is the western harbor of the Blessed Isles. But events are also worse for the good man. The sight of slums may be to the racketeer only a bitter anger, or only a hideout, whereas to the genuinely good man all "man's inhumanity to man" is an anguish and an inescapable burden. Besides, a truly righteous man is a judgment on the world which the world cannot abide unless it change; and the world turns and rends him, whether his name be Isaiah or Socrates—or Christ. Besides, the truly righteous man—that is, a man whose purity is held in compassion—does not despise the bad man, but claims him as brother: in love he wishes to share the self-invited doom of the bad man, and because he *is* pure the shame thus shared cuts more cruelly. O yes, events are worse for the righteous!

Three crosses on a hill: three men dying there. "All things come alike to all, and there is one event to" all three of them. The wood of the gallows was the same. The nails were the same. The downward drawing of the blood and the cramp were the same. The buzzing of the flies about their helpless heads and the sun's rays like swords were the same. The mocking of men and the merciful cloud of death were the same. "There is one event": of course there is. But the one event drew from the man on the left hand a fearful blasphemy, but from the man on the right hand a sudden penitence: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest to Thy kingdom!" *Was* it *one* event, or by its inwardnesses *two* events?

It was worst event for Him. To His poet's soul of music the discords of that blackness were more piercing discords. To His pure soul the shame was more shameful shame. To His compassion the need of mankind was now utter, unendurable need—the need of men become alienate from God. Of Him the words were now true with a diviner meaning:

> Desperate ties of the whole great world's anguish
> Forced through the channels of a single heart.

Was it "one event"? He might have railed on God, or prayed, saying, "It ought not to be one event. Righteousness should have its due." Instead He said, "It

must not be one event. I would like to bear every cross, so that unrighteous men may come home to their lost joy. Father, forgive them: they know not what they do." There is *one* event? One blow fell on Calvary. It struck this man, and brought an answering ring of oaths. It struck that man, and broke a sealed fountain of penitential tears. It struck Christ, and shattered an alabaster soul of fragrance, and sent the fragrance through the world. One event? *The* event of time and eternity in Christ!

V

Have we been saying in shallow mind, "one event"? Coleridge has a word for us if we can endure it: "But he who should repeat these words . . . to an ignorant man in the hour of his temptation . . . would in spite of their verbal truth, be a liar, and the murderer of his brother's conscience." There is not "one event." In a real sense there is a better event for the righteous: "Light is sown for the righteous." There is an inwardness in every event for the righteous—even the inwardness of God. Nay, there is love in every event for the righteous—the love which seeks the worst and makes it best. You do not know what even may befall you in this troubled time? Sorrow, danger, poverty? No matter! Goodness can make the dark bright, and redeeming love can turn the worst into the coming of God in the earth.

The Wave of the Future

THE "wave of the future" will be characterized by freedom, by interracialism, by internationalism, by interfaith cooperation, by the establishment of an enduring peace based on social justice. This wave of the future cannot be dissipated by despots and tyrants, by bombing planes and by tanks. This wave of the future is the will of God and to it men must submit, and when they refuse to submit that wave will destroy them. . . .

But you say, Why, if the wave of the future belong to God, is there this suffering? Why does God not destroy the tyrant? Because in part we have made these tyrants. We have created the conditions under which they flourish. We have fructified the soil in which they have taken root. For centuries and centuries we have known what God's will was. We have known that he stands for racial equality, for international cooperation, for social justice and for peace. We have proclaimed the commandment to love thy neighbor as thyself as the supreme commandment. We have known God's will, but we have violated it. We have justified racial inequality. We have despised other peoples. We have cared only for ourselves. We have allowed ourselves to become the victims of religious prejudices. We have coined nationalistic slogans which reveal an indifference to other people. We have acquiesced in every form of injustice. Yet, at the same time we have voiced our faith in the one God who is the Father of all. We have violated God's will. The suffering of this age is his day of reckoning. Modern tyrants are his chastising rod.

FERDINAND ISSERMAN.

God Marches On!

BY ALBERT EDWARD DAY

He hath showed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. Luke 1:51.

PEOPLE go to history for strange things. A man appeared at the New York Public Library the other day and asked the librarians to find for him a book that would tell him exactly what Columbus ate on the first day out on his first voyage of discovery. What Columbus ate and what George Washington drank, if anything, and what Queen Elizabeth wore and the kind of home in which Nero carried on his orgies—these and similar inconsequentials seem to be the range of some people's interest in history.

But the most of us have larger questions to ask as we ponder the story of the human community of which we are a part. Is God doing anything in history? Is it, indeed, a "tale full of sound and fury, signifying nothing"? Or is it the area of God's activity? And what is happening to him there? Is he being defeated by human ignorance and devilishness, or is he winning victories? Is he retreating or facing stalemate or marching on? Our text describes the progress of a conqueror. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" jubilantly affirms: "He has sounded forth the trumpet that will never call retreat, he is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment seat. Be swift, my soul, to answer him, be radiant my feet, for God is marching on." Is that the reality of history or the mere rhapsody of a poet?

GOD IN SPECIFIC INCIDENTS?

Some people try to find an answer in specific incidents. A storm shattered the formidable Spanish Armada on its way to subdue England, and England remained a Protestant country instead of being compelled to join the Catholic realm. Napoleon's army, hitherto unhalted in its strides across Europe, was turned back by the heavy snows of Russia; what guns and cannon could not do, God's snowflakes did. General Meade of the Union army was anxiously pacing back and forth in his tent on the night before the Battle of Gettysburg. He was confronted by the armies of General Lee, one of the world's most brilliant military strategists. A mistake in the disposition of his own forces and the battle would be lost and maybe the war. A profound impression came to him that he ought to station his battalions thus and so. He did and they were able to meet the enemy as they charged in what was meant to be a surprise attack. Again and yet again that happened during those fateful days in which American destiny was being decided. And one famous lecturer thrilled American audiences a generation ago by the assertion that not General Meade but God won the battle of Gettysburg. Not long ago a minister reminded me that during the First World War President Wilson had appointed a national day of prayer and that German armies were not able to make a single advance after the American

people had called on God for victory. Soon began the retreat which ended in collapse.

But such interpretations raise more questions than they answer. Why did not the weather intervene on many other occasions when good causes were at stake and great history-making events were in the offing? In 1939 when Hitler's divisions were sweeping across Poland, rain and mud would have offered a resistance which Polish battalions could not. But no rains came and the murderous onslaught left a nation in ruin. Leland Stowe says that a few British planes and soldiers could have prevented the invasion of Norway. Why didn't God impress the mind of the British commander-

Albert Edward Day

in-chief to send planes and men as God is said to have miraculously impressed the mind of General Meade at Gettysburg? What prayers had been offered as nazi panzer divisions have trampled into dust the independence and liberties of one nation after another in hapless Europe. Why did not God intervene to halt this monstrous wrong, this blasphemy of man? Will anybody argue that God does not care or that Hitler is God's chosen instrument?

DEFECTIVE SHORT RANGE VIEWS

Others try to decide what God is doing or whether he is doing anything by short-range views of the course of history, by the study of one war or one dynasty or one century of progress or decay. They find God, they say, in the triumph of Charles Martel over the Saracens at Tours, or of the Union over the Confederacy at Appomattox; in the age of Pericles in Greece or the golden era of Augustus in Rome; in the victory of the barons over King John at Runnymede or the overthrow of the Russian Duma or the prosperity of the Coolidge administration.

But such appraisals are very inadequate. One does not rightly estimate the forces at work in any historical situation if he studies the span of one event or one year or one century. To charge one victory or one defeat, one year of prosperity or adversity to God is to bring false judgment. In the immediate context of cause and result to look for the final evidence of the character and plan of God is to misread history and misinterpret God. One striking illustration of that appears in the work of the great historian Edward Gibbon. In his account of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, Gibbon attributes Rome's overthrow to two forces: the attack of barbarians from beyond the Rhine and the Danube, and the disintegrating influence of the Christian church imported from Asia Minor. The picture he draws is of a benign empire destroyed by forces from without, and he leaves one wondering about a God who would permit such disaster. Did God not care or was God helpless? But Gibbon missed the whole point because he took too narrow a view. His study covered too short a span of time. He began his narrative not at the beginning or even in the middle but almost at the end of the tragic events which brought Rome into being and laid her in the dust. He failed to see that the Roman empire itself was but the last expiring effort of Hellenic society to save itself from destruction. Six hundred years before what Gibbon recites as the cause of disaster came the real calamity. Twin abominations were admitted into the Hellenic life—interstate war and interclass war. A society which cherished such abominations was at war with God.

THE REAL RELATION OF GOD TO MAN

In the long run, there is only one possible outcome —that society is defeated, not God. God cannot tolerate the spirit of atrocity, for God is love. The decline and fall of the Roman empire, instead of being an indictment against God, is his vindication. It reveals not a careless God but a God who is marching on. A long view corrects the error of the short one.

God is not an absolute ruler, who returns once in a while in answer to prayer or because of his own concern lest things go too badly, thrusts in an almighty hand and gives the tortuous events of history a twist in a new and happier direction. God is immanent in the very structure of reality.The uniformities and the freedom of man are the result of that immanence. But they do not exhaust this immanence. Within and around and above the uniformities of nature and the freedom of man flow the regulative life and spirit of God, setting bounds to what both man and nature can do. With infinite determination does God watch man's use of his freedom. He does not settle accounts every Saturday night. Not every decision of the individual or every policy of government or every presidential election or every military achievement represents his will. But neither can they ultimately defeat his will.

Against principalities and powers and rulers of the world's darkness stand the ultimate, divine, invulnerable structure of reality and the indefatigable Spirit

which gives it vitality and direction. God's processes are slow but sure. God's dreams seem to be, to our impatience, long in fulfillment but fulfilled they will be. No folly or fury or man can veto them. God marches on!

A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jellyfish and a saurian,
The caves where wild men dwell;
Then a sense of law and order,
And a face turned from the clod—
Some call it Evolution,
Others call it God.

How long ere the fire-mist became the planet, and the crystal a cell, and the jellyfish a saurian, and the caves where wild men dwell the beginning of those aspirations which were to lay the foundations of law and order? In any span of one hundred or five hundred years, the skeptical, cynical observer might have said: "Where now is thy God?" and the believer would have been hard put for an answer. But God was there and on the march toward the goal.

What was true of the scene before human history, has not ceased to be true since the chronicle of man's pilgrimage began to unroll. Crowns and thrones have perished, kingdoms have risen and waned; strange phenomena have appeared; moral growth has alternated with moral decay; truth and error have in turn triumphed. There have been ages of doubt and ages of faith. Right has been crucified and wrong enthroned. If there were a God anywhere, he has seemed notoriously indifferent or hopelessly incompetent. If he did create the universe, it apparently has got out of hand. If he did have any plans for the race, they seem terribly to have gone awry. Most of the time God's family has been a pretty boisterous crowd, much more a headache than a rapture, if not an irretrievable disaster.

But God is here in history, as he was in the long story of evolution preceding history. His immediate strategies are not always discernible, but his long-range strategy is fairly clear. His power in any moment is not usually apparent, but across the centuries it is evident. His activity in any situation cannot be identified, but his activity in the long run is indubitable. From day to day, from year to year, or even century to century, his progress seems imperceptible, but the millenniums reveal his movement, his direction and his goal.

God marches on! The kind of men we must be and the direction we must go, if we are to march with him and share his victory, are beginning to emerge. The kind of society God is seeking and the patterns which our society must follow if it is to endure are also becoming clear. The spirit which is challenging our civilization and the spirit which must find expression in our institutions if they are not ultimately to be thrust aside is scarcely a matter of argument in the light of the history of the long past. Three illustrations and my story is told.

God is on the march against cruelty. Biblical exhortations to justice, kindness, mercy, love are not mere pious effusions but realistic statements of the demand made by God upon man and his institutions. To ignore those demands is to invite inexorable and complete destruction.

AGAINST CRUELTY

In 610 B.C. a society which had been in existence for two thousand years and which had been playing an ever dominant part in southwest Asia for two and a half centuries, was blotted out so completely that only two hundred years later even its name had disappeared and the prophecy of Nahum was fulfilled with precision: "Thy nobles shall dwell in dust; thy people are scattered upon the mountains and no man gathereth them." What lies behind this catastrophe which extinguished the Assyrian empire and name? Not military inefficiency. The Assyrian war machine was a world's wonder. It was distinguished by the thoroughness with which it was perpetually overhauled and renovated down to the very day of destruction. It was ready for any kind of warfare, a long siege, mountain fighting, or the battle of the open plain. It believed in the sovereign virtue of the unremitting offensive. Its successes took it as far afield over the Eastern world as Hitler's have taken him over Europe.

But its very successes destroyed Assyria. Its ruthlessness ground down the highland peoples of Zagros and Taurus, which had been a buffer between it and nomad peoples, and opened a passage for the nomads to descend upon it. The same ruthlessness which deported the broken peoples of Syria to the opposite end of the empire, by that very deportation, placed Syria in a position later to encircle its oppressor. Its enormities called down upon itself palace revolutions and peasant revolts. Its frightfulness raised up enemies who were fused together in a white heat of revulsion, who vowed never to forgive and never to forget until Assyria was crushed.

The very cruelties which were the weapons of its strength became the cause of its ruin. No military might, no command of resources, no tradition of victory, no culture though two thousand years in growing, can save a civilization whose heart is cruel. The immanent God of love brings that civilization to judgment, pronounces its doom and marches on!

AGAINST THE MUTILATION OF HUMANITY

God is on the march against any society which mutilates man in the effort to achieve political power. Behold Sparta! In order to maintain its domination over a neighboring city-state it proceeded in utter disregard of human nature to create a military machine. It employed eugenics to breed soldiers; it penalized bachelors, it offered rewards for large families, it set its approval on husbands who arranged for better fathers for their children than they themselves could be and on any woman who sought a better sire than her husband if he were under par. When children came, it took them from their homes at the age of seven and subjected them to disciplines until they were sixty. They were compelled to marry and beget children but were forbidden any home life. A Spartan soldier was obliged to spend even his wedding night in the barracks. The ban on dining at home was absolute and

permanent. By training, a powerful sanction was created within the Spartan soul which made a Spartan die rather than fail. A Spartan gestapo, an official murder gang, was constantly on the job to see that there were no derelictions.

Thus was created a military machine which in drill and morale was invincible and which for two long centuries filled rival armies with dread. But the Spartans in the process forfeited their humanity. All in man that creates art, sculpture, music died. Man's normal capacity for adaptation to new environment passed from them. They became sub-humanly unfit to live in the wider world into which their military victories carried them. They betrayed man to make a soldier. They got the soldier but lost the man. And Sparta perished. The God who created man in his image and ordained a society where man could cherish the divine dream of his manhood, weighed Spartan civilization in the balances and found it wanting. Abandoning it to its inevitable fate in a man-demanding world, God marched out with aching heart but with will as undismayed as it is loving and good. Sparta, which betrayed its own humanity to win and keep power, is dead. But the God whose passion is humanity lives and still seeks a civilization that will make men in whom the image of God is cherished.

AGAINST REACTION

God is on the march toward better answers to the challenges which confront society in its relation to nature, to other societies, to its own internal problems. God demands growth and will not abide a static civilization. That is the one great certainty of history. A score of civilizations have perished. As long as they were creative, they lived. When they ceased to be creative, when they began to worship their past, to accept as permanent some institution or technique which was temporarily effective, they died.

Athens, once the educator of Greece, clung to that role and lost her chance in a post-Periclean age. Israel, achieving momentary spiritual eminence by the discovery of the one true God, assumed that nothing more was necessary and rejected God's incarnation in Jesus and found tragically enough that she had rejected her own future. Greece, obsessed by the structure of a city-state, went down before the requirements of a larger political structure such as the Roman empire provided. The tragic story of the past is summed up in three Greek words which mean: the surfeit of success, the loss of mental and moral balance, disaster. "New occasions teach new duties, time makes ancient good uncouth, they must upward still and onward who would keep abreast of truth." Unless a civilization will march on with the God of truth to the discovery of new duties, God will march on and will leave that civilization behind to wallow in the dust of its own disaster.

No, history is not a tale full of sound and fury signifying nothing. It is the arena where a God of love is attempting to provide a stage on which man shall realize his heritage as the image of God, through institutions which foster and express his divine humanity, and which are perpetually revised to meet the demands of his divinely stimulated growth. The bestial, the subhuman, the static are doomed. Their doom may be delayed, for God has a cross to bear. "God is not slack concerning his promises but is long suffering, not willing that any should perish." He will not permit his world to become a jungle, a huge, impersonal, ruthless machine, a museum of relics. If Western civilization will not rid itself of its cruelties, its tendencies toward the mechanization of personality, its idolatry of the past, God will get rid of Western civilization.

You who have read "The Terrible Meek" will remember that scene where the mother of Jesus is standing with a Roman soldier under the shadow of Calvary. The captain is talking to the mother as they stand there and is confessing with shame what he and his fellows are doing, murdering, destroying. The mother asks plaintively: "What makes them do it?" The captain replies: "They want money; they want power; they want kingdoms; they want to possess the earth." And the mother, thinking of her son hanging there on the cross, replies: "And they have won. They have it." But the captain answers in a flash of insight: "Have they? Not while your son hangs there."

Not while God is like Christ will the earth be surrendered to the cruel and the destroyer, to the Hitlers and the Stalins and the Mussolinis, to the barons of privilege, to the imperialistic exploiters of their fellow men.

God is marching on and only the Godlike can endure.

New Conquests for the Church

HOWEVER MUCH we may value the past, for us it can never be final. God has not spoken his last word or his best. Jesus Christ has not yet exhausted his power to redeem and to transform. There are still vast reaches of truth to be penetrated, new meanings in the old Gospel still to be disclosed. There are still great stretches of territory waiting to be subdued to Christ's obedience, millions of hungry hearts longing for the satisfaction he can bring. It is for his church to win these conquests, to appropriate this truth, and to render this ministry. But we shall succeed in our mission only as we turn our eyes from the past and even from the present to the greater and better future that awaits us. Still the Master's promise holds true for those who have faith to receive it. "The works that I do shall ye do also, and greater works than these ye do because I go to my Father."

WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN.

THE CHURCH must come to see itself, not as a sacrosanct institution of God, to be preserved at all hazards in its traditional form; but as an instrument to be used, sharpened, bent into new shape, or wholly replaced, as the need of the world may demand, and as God may will. The law of Jesus that only he who loses his life shall save it must be cheerfully taken by the church as its law. Let what may happen to the church, if only the Kingdom of God may come!

WILLIAM PIERSON MERRILL.

God's Claim on Man's Mind

By Paul E. Scherer

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Matthew 22:37-39.

IT was one of the lawyers, or theologians, of the time who asked Jesus that day what came first in religion. A whole raft of things had got in the way. A kind of moralism, for instance: full of don'ts and not noticeably exciting, but called the good life, and still often used as a substitute for religion. With an endless ritual besides, which had done for them very much what liturgy is sometimes allowed to do with us: as plain song springs up while commandments disappear, and truth makes way for beauty. Everybody had his own notions about what came first. And Jesus cut straight through it all to the very heart of the ancient law. He took from Deuteronomy man's love for God, and from Leviticus man's love for his fellow man, and to his own eternal glory wedded them forever. On them both, as if they were the twin keystones of some arch, he leaned the whole structure of life and religion.

It is with the first by itself that I want to deal; and with only one element in it: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy mind." I can see well enough what it means to love God with all my heart: with every warm and tender affection. I can understand what it means to love him with all my soul: with those deeper impulses and motions of my spirit, reaching out bravely toward the sweep of his. But what does it mean to love God with my mind? That's something new. You won't find that in Deuteronomy. Jesus put it in!

I

Of course it isn't possible to break oneself up into bits like this and vote on God item by item, seriatim. If Jesus means anything, he means that God has to be elected by the whole man unanimously: all my powers leaping to their feet together, and calling on the name of the Lord—*viva voce,* as they say in Congress—"all that is within me" struggling up to the tip of my tongue and crying out, "God blessed forever!" He simply insists that the mind has to be there too. It can't be left out in the lobby chatting with the others about everything under heaven. You can't send it downtown to your office while the rest of you is here singing "My God! how wonderful Thou art," by Frederick William Faber, set to music by John B. Dykes in the year 1874! Love with the mind absent is the kind of thing people "fall into" sometimes; but they usually want to get out of it as promptly as they can.

Yet that is precisely what this sophisticated world of ours wants to make out of religion: love with the mind absent! In the best informed circles it doesn't seem to be quite one hundred per cent respectable to be religious. You are supposed to have a maximum of something called faith, and a minimum of that other commodity known as knowledge. You shut your eyes very tightly and believe in a number of things that are not true; at least nobody can prove them. You join lustily in hymns that are chock-full of moral and intellectual dishonesty, hugging to your bosom words that have lost their content, putting to a tune your hope for things you don't hope for: like "Jerusalem, my happy home, would God I were in thee"; or, "Draw us to Thee, Lord Jesus, and we will hasten on; for strong desire doth seize us to go where Thou art gone." There aren't many who really mean it—but the tune is all right! You have only to check your thinking outside; or do with it what the janitor of some church said he did with his: they asked him how he got along with so many men and women telling him what to do; and his answer was, Well, I just throw my mind into neutral, and go where I'm pushed!

That's what they say *we* do; and it disturbs me to realize that in large measure we have had it coming to us. We ourselves are more than a little responsible for it. Some of us boast ourselves as liberals. We don't care much about your doctrine or your creed or anything like that. What you believe doesn't matter a great deal, if only you'll throw yourself in alongside and work hard with us for the Kingdom of God: you don't need a great deal of information about either God or the Kingdom! I think we'd be surprised to know that kind of talk has actually helped along this accusation that we don't use our minds in religion at all! Others want to jog along with a few emotional reactions now and then; want them stimulated every once in a while, very much as you would stimulate your knee-jump—just to be sure that everything's in running condition; and besides, it feels good! No use asking them any questions. Questions upset them. They've finished with all that. Better just take what you're told, and say it over and over; it will settle down after a while and give you no trouble at all. Until we have on the one hand a motor-type of Christian, who finds in opportunities for action what Bishop Gore once called a refuge from the rigors of thought; while, on the other, sits the altogether subjective and sentimental soul who "fears to think lest he cease to love," whose heart still worships while his head withdraws.

I submit to you, there is a claim which God has on the minds of men. Nobody needs for one moment to discount the beauty that comes of simple devotion, or the sheer power that comes again and again of a child-like and unreasoning faith. Anyone may urge all he likes the limits that are set to our knowledge. Over and over, through all the common mysteries of life, there is nothing left for a man to do but to put his hand over his mouth as Job did to keep from being impertinent! But he must know in spite of everything that he is called to this "tall enterprise of life" which goes by the name of religion with all the equipment he has. It isn't enough any longer—it never was enough—to be zealous and well disposed. It isn't enough to be stirred by the rush of strong emotions, like fields of wheat on the prairie bending to the wind. Says the

Book of Proverbs, he that "hasteth with his feet sinneth; and the soul that is without knowledge, it is not good." There in that dramatic scene of the first chapter Wisdom cries aloud: "Because I have called and ye refused, I will mock when your fear cometh, when your fear cometh as a storm." The kind of Christianity that goes to pieces under pressure is the kind that tries to limp into the presence of Almighty God a partial, crippled thing, with less than its whole self; because its mind, for one reason or another, is missing!

II

Let me suggest then that there are two great areas within the realm of religious experience where you and I have to be doing at present the very best thinking of which we are capable; and doing it with our heads, instead of attempting to do so much of it with our hearts. We are bound by the very necessities of our time to be concerning ourselves first with the being and nature of God. Most of the trouble people have with their faith comes not of knowing too much about life, but of knowing too little about God!

We can learn for ourselves if we will, it seems to me, something of his majesty: so that we shall not be treating him any more as if he were a vest-pocket edition of our own desires, called in to run our errands, or to bless our willful and peevish brutalities. To stand bareheaded and alone before a flaming sunset is to know better than that; or to stare into the cold depths of a winter sky. On the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul's Cathedral, of which he was the architect, is this simple inscription: "If you seek his memorial, look around you." I have stood on the deck of a ship at sea, and on the jutting rock at the top of a mountain. I have flown over the snow-capped Rockies. It isn't likely that such a God will be tied to a string, or ever let things get out of control.

And I believe if we will we can learn something of his love in the face of Jesus Christ: of how he undertook to win back his lost creation in the only way there was to win it back, than which we ourselves could have thought of no better. Coming into it like that, and laying fast hold on it with both hands, and being hurt to death by it, as men are and God must be. Yet all the while keeping the even scales of life; piling up his knotted might against the wrong; striking his balance across the years in the rise and fall of men and of nations, so that nobody can talk of chaos anywhere. Behind it there is order!

It is in this paradox of a love that is still severe, of a kindness that is still poised and full of restraint, that one of the greatest difficulties we have with our religion takes its origin. From beginning to end the Bible confronts us with a God so full of eagerness that he gets to every rendezvous we make with him before we do; sets out from it in our direction to meet us with his bounty as we come up. "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." And I am quite confident that to most of us he doesn't seem that way at all. He seems reluctant. We take it for granted almost every time we open our mouth to speak to him. In our services of worship we plead with him to have mercy on us. We beg him for some grace. We coax him for some good. We want him to change his mind, to think better of something, and for pity's sake to preserve us from something else. What on earth do you suppose this is that we are forever trying to overcome in God—so continually that religion itself seems to be concerned with that as it is with nothing else?

Isn't it just this: that there is One at least with whom there is no variableness; "who knows no change of rising and acting, who casts no shadow on the earth"? Isn't it because, though some of us may have no morals left, *God has;* and won't tinker with his

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universe, not even if I get hurt because he won't? It is high time for us to be saying to ourselves that he is not and never was free to do as he likes: to feed the poor with manna, and keep the Belgians from starving; to stop this folly of blood and tears; to sabotage creation and do our job for us. I don't see why we keep hoping that some day he might! If he should just once relax under our pressure, every solid hope we have for this world and the next would curl up, roll over flat on its back with its legs in the air, and breathe its last! Wanting God to do as *we* want is wanting him to quit being *God!*

Yet that's how we have come to think of God as if he were reluctant. We've run up against him so solidly and so often—this God of Amen, as the prophet called him; making you think of Jesus with his "Verily, Verily"! Groping around blindly at the center of things for a kind of almighty flexibility, we have got in our very hands, to bewilder us over and over again, the feel of his great-hearted constancy. So that now we have adopted the mood of conciliation whenever we

turn our faces toward him! It may be the kind of rigidity that will yield, if only we keep after him: incite, incline, induce, dispose, sing him the song of the Sirens. And nowhere on earth or in heaven is there such a God! Nowhere any sudden rubbing of lamps that we had forgotten, Aladdin-like; nowhere a Sultan's daughter; nowhere a wondrous palace. That's heathenism pure and simple.

The God with whom we have to deal is steady; but his steadiness is the steadiness of an eager and unchangeable love that keeps stretching out its hands to me morning, noon and night, hoping and waiting to be understood: until something down here in this dark, deep, tangled forest of desire which is my soul begins to stir and come alive. A window somewhere in the musty, "stuffed, and stopped-up" corridors of my life is flung open to the dawn; and I make up my mind, by the little touch of God that's left in me, to get back on my feet with my memorized entreaty, keeping time to it on the road: Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he stops me there, right in the middle of it! That's the gospel. He won't let me finish it. He'll get his answer in ahead of my call. He's out of the gate and up the hill to take me in his arms; to put his scarred hands on my face, and tell the angels I've come. "My son! My son! All that about making you a hired servant—I won't do it. It's nonsense. You're my own. Here's the robe I've been saving against this day, and the ring I've kept; here are the shoes that have been standing there empty so long—so very long! My son! And you were dead! And you're alive!"

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind." Really, it is because we *don't* that we are puzzled; or run off our own way, trying to pull him after us. It is because we don't that we let misfortune ruin us and make us "angry with the Eternal." It is because our minds have gone out of them that our enthusiasms wane, and this high adventure of faith turns dull and commonplace. You have seen a boy's face light up as some undreamed of truth began to break across the horizons of his life; or a chemist bending eagerly over his little flame in the laboratory, with a bubbling test tube in front of him. You remember Kepler, peering with his dim eyes at the stars, and telling his wife as he came down from the roof, "I've been thinking the thoughts of God." It's ridiculous to talk of finding that stupid and tedious! It's the farthest kind of love there is; and it helps to keep burning the only undiscourageable fires I know in the human soul. Until, from having heard God's Word, we grow "able to bear his silences!"

III

There is a claim *God* makes on man's mind; and there is a claim *Life* makes. That is the other great area in which we've got to begin thinking with our heads instead of with our hearts. When we do, we'll see that something is wrong with it way down that it takes God to handle. I have no desire to call it by Greek and Latin names: it is the sin that clings to us as the crude marble seems to cling to the feet and legs of Michelangelo's slaves. The whole story of man's life is written around his struggle with it. If it weren't here to plague us, the Word of God wouldn't be here to haunt us. Through all these pages men and women keep tearing at it. In one way or another the world wouldn't come right. There was that about it which piled up against their plans and defeated them. Until there came One who spake as never yet man spake; and his mouth was stopped with death. But some saw God in him, and they began to clutch with their fingers at the bare edge of a vast hope. Perhaps Calvary wasn't the last and ugliest riddle Life had spun: perhaps somehow it was God's answer to all riddles! They had run away from it that sultry noon when the black cloud was overhead and the trembling earth beneath; now they came back to it when the Sabbath was past, lingered wistfully up its rough, familiar slope, and stood looking out over a world that was strangely different—leaning there for their need, as at no other place, against the Mind of God!

Perhaps if we would let it, that would help spell for us the death of all this sense of futility which so many carry about with them: the idea that it's no use anyway, a waste of time and effort; that the dice are loaded and the cards are against us. Nothing, I suppose, is more characteristic of our modern world, and surely nothing is deadlier. Almost the first question young people put to you nowadays is, What's it all about? What am I living for? And very few of us seem to realize that nobody would ever think of asking that question if he hadn't got off on the wrong foot somewhere, with some mistaken notion of human nature. Most of our cynicism comes from that. We have such a habit of guessing with our hearts that we are either full of sweetness and light, or full of rottenness and stupidity! It is the atheism of pride on the one hand, or the atheism of despair on the other. And there's no choice. We are neither. We are both things at once, as the Bible says we are. It keeps insisting that we are a kind of battlefield between God and the devil: ploughed over by the hosts of darkness, and brushed by angels' wings. That isn't poetry at all: it is the bleakest prose. Life is actually like that. It digs down through these pages under the sorriest thought you can have of yourself or of any man; then all at once starts scrambling straight up toward heaven, leaving you and all your bravest dreams dawdling behind! To see ourselves as we are, that height and that depth, with no room between the two for anybody to stand around puzzled and disillusioned; only enough to serve as an orbit for the human soul, swinging up and out like a kind of censer in the hands of God! What is futile then?

And what is cheap? Living is cheap only when we feel that way about it and make it so. I have a young friend who would never think of letting you call her an atheist; yet she has a notion that when she gets tired of life she has a perfect right to end it. She believes in everything but life itself. And that's a sickening mess. She's got it on her hands, and she sees nothing wrong in chucking it. What of it, if she doesn't

care for it? Nothing—only that if Christ is true it came one day from God, with all the long vistas of his own great life hidden in it. And I'll not be flinging mine back in his face like dirt! Or flinging it around either as I please; or just letting it rot—because I think there's no longer any point in it. When a man goes at life like that, he isn't going at it with his head!

I sat the other day with "a lovely lady, garmented in light." She is ninety years old, and quite alone in her home except for the two maids who are in her service. Her step on the stair was quick and sure. At the foot of them she stood with her hands on my shoulders, not seeing very well, and asked me how I looked. Then sat straight and alive, with mischief on her lips, carrying the white of many winters in her hair so jauntily. She told me she had been kept right busy of late trying to find out why God wanted her here so long. He must have something in mind. And she'd be bound if she wouldn't wring the secret from him yet! If life is as meaningless as we sometimes try to make it with our hearts, then there's no God in it! If there is, it doesn't matter ever so little how we *feel* about it: it is an unbelievably precious, an incalculable and endless thing!

And we've got to begin thinking with our heads about how to live it, instead of running off to do what our emotions tell us to do, and asking God to let us get away with it. Sure that Jesus didn't know what he was talking about. We've got to exterminate some people. It's the only way to do. Never mind at all how things in this queer world hit back. Hate the Jew. Snub the Negro. Outlaw the Japanese. Vilify the Hun, only to find that what you've stirred up won't lie down. Slap and shove and fight your way along, only to wonder at last what there is that won't let it work: with the walls of life pressing in, as they did in Poe's story; and the pit there in the middle, waiting for you to be inched over the edge of it, when there's not even a fingerhold left! Playing fast and loose, until whatever it is in life that answers plays loose with you and very fast!

I get them often, these people, with their bewildered faces, the corners of their mouths turned down to about twenty minutes past eight, and their bitter lips that they keep licking. And I've made up my mind: I don't like what anything does to life, except these things that Jesus said. I like what they do. If we'd think about it with our heads a little, perhaps our hearts would warm to it more. Life isn't what we want it: it's as God made it. And the sermon Jesus preached one day to a whole hillside of uneasy people was its blueprint. I dare say, after all, sin is what the Book of Proverbs says it is: it is the wisdom of a fool!

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." It must have been tremendously important for him to add it that way to the very creed of his people, to the Word of God itself, to the faith he had professed and the prayer he had prayed twice for every day of his life! I think it was the secret of all his own soul's harmonies. It was because he knew so well with his mind that Other Mind that he could see a light streaming through the darkness even on a cross, and die with a smile on his lips: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth. Thou hast set my feet in a large room!" It is the Mind that is to be in us, like the magic dome where every sound resolves itself into music, and comes swelling back in a deep diapason to stir a thousand echoes before it throbs away into silence. It is the Mind that still overarches our poor earth: with the noise of the crowd that keeps shouting "Barabbas," and the continuous hammering of nails into wood, rolling under it softly now like the chords of a great organ!

The Eternal and the Timely

By Ralph W. Sockman

Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Hebrews 12:1, 2.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8.

THE refrain of a rollicking old song runs, "We don't know where we're going, but we're on our way." The carefree mood of that sentiment may be suitable for a picnic, but life today is no picnic. Vague indefiniteness of direction may satisfy a tramp whose subsistence is begged from the back doors of life and whose home is the road. But we are not content to be vagabonds. We are not at home on the road. We want to know where we are going; and we want the goal to be both worthy and enduring.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews in his time of tension realized how poignantly man longs for permanence in the midst of change; and he sought to answer this craving by lifting the eyes of his readers from the passing scene to the end of the road. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Then, in the next chapter, he bursts forth in enthusiastic ejaculation: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." But in seeking to give a pivotal polestar to the distracted whom the world was pushing around, the writer to the Hebrews puts his terms so strongly that the very extravagance of the language tends to excite questions, even doubts.

Is there anyone or anything deserving the assertion, "the same yesterday, and today, and forever"? This all too solid earth does not merit such a description. We speak of the eternal hills, but there was a yesterday when they were not, and there will be a tomorrow when the earth will see them no more. And if we could look closely enough we should see that corrosion is wreaking its change from year to year. According to the second law of thermo-dynamics, the materials of nature drift steadily toward a more inert state. This physical universe, therefore, is not eternally the same.

And when we turn to the realm of human relations, certainly there is less stability. Is not Christianity just one of the historic faiths, and is it not, therefore, subject to the change and decay which have befallen other religions? Is it not reasonable to expect that some day a new revelation of God may appear, superseding the one given in Galilee?

In fact, some think that Christianity is already on the way out. In September 1940, when the Society for Psychological Study of Social Issues held its convention, the presidential address as reported in the press contained these striking sentences: "Where are we to find a new religion that is as strong as the Protestant religion that was and the religion of nationalism that is? Such a new religion, with a new set of symbols, a new set of slogans, is needed to put across our education for the harmonious man." And if, in reply to such a suggestion, we make the hackneyed remark that Christianity is not to be discarded as a failure because it has not yet been tried, the critics might well come back with the statement that if after nineteen centuries our religion has not been tried, perhaps it is because Christ's principles are impossible of application to this world. A score of questions and doubts arise to assail the claims of Christ to be the founder of the world's final religion.

Why and in what sense, then, can we say, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever"?

JESUS DEALT WITH DIRECTIONS

First, because Jesus dealt with *directions* rather than *definitions*. There is a Jesus way of approach to life which is independent of the conditions under which it is lived. It is a way of reacting to one's environment. It is a way of looking at things whatever be the things looked at. When he said, "Be not anxious for the morrow," he was telling us that in our attitude toward the future, the direction is trust. When he discussed the matter of charity, the Master did not enter into the details of investigation and methods; he sweepingly said, "Give to him that asketh thee." He was concerned with the outgoing direction of life and the direction is to give. When Peter asked him, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" Jesus replied, "I say not unto thee, until seven times; but until seventy times seven." That meant to keep on forgiving indefinitely, for in the Jesus way of life, the direction is to forgive. And he summed up these directions in the inclusive injunction, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." To Jesus' directions, the sky is the limit. We can never outrun a direction. However far we go, there will always be an east opening before us. The Rocky mountains may some day be carried into the sea, but west will still be west. Directions are limitless and eternal.

Jesus set eternity in the hearts of his followers and infinity in their aspirations. In doing so he gave an ethical absolute which is a "real" in moral living somewhat as infinity is a "real" in mathematics. Perfectionism cannot be attained existentially. But it is an "impossible possible," or rather it is an *impossible necessity;* for it is a paradoxical truism that when we strive expectantly for the things we cannot do, we are enabled to do better the things we can do. By following in his directions we join those heroic spirits who "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

PERSONAL ATTITUDES, NOT INSTITUTIONS

A second reason for Christ's continuing validity, "the same yesterday, and today, and forever," is that he dealt with *personal attitudes* rather than with *institutional adjustments*. Attempts were repeatedly made to entangle Jesus in institutional questions. On one occasion, a man came to him saying, "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." Jesus replied, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" Then he turned to the spectators and said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." Suppose Jesus had been induced to give specific regulations regarding that inheritance. His decision would have been frozen by his followers into a precedent, which would have been outmoded long before Europe's Middle Ages or our modern property complexities. But covetousness is an ever live issue, never more so than in our highly competitive present society.

At another time his critics came to Jesus with the question, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" Jesus called for a penny and said, "Whose is this image and superscription?" They replied, "Caesar's." Then said he unto them, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Suppose Jesus had allowed himself to lay down some concrete prescriptions about taxation. They, too, would have been hardened into precedents. But of what value would such precedents be in guiding us Americans through the tax problems of 1942 when one month's governmental expenditures would have bought all the property of first century Palestine? But the principle of "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's" has kept men thinking on the question of comparative loyalties until it has now become just about the livest and most decisive issue in the world today. And if someone should say that Jesus' general principle was an evasion, then let him take note that our Lord imparted a spirit which eventually put Caesars in their subordinate place and will do so again, a spirit which eventually "brought forth on this continent a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," a government not of the Caesars and for the Caesars, but "a government of the people and by the people and for the people."

Jesus put personal values before institutional. "The Sabbath is made for man and not man for the Sabbath." The state is made for man and not man for the state, or to use the Archbishop of York's recent words, Jesus stood for the "Welfare State" as against the "Power State." Although he gave no specific legislation on social institutions, he imparted a leavening

spirit which has been lifting the crust of institutional restrictions ever since, and the end is not yet. We are only beginning to explore the inner potencies of man and the outward extension of them into the institutional realm. Far from exhausting the principles of Jesus, we are glimpsing more clearly how inexhaustible they are. As W. E. Orchard said twenty years ago, "Christ may exhaust this world: this world will never exhaust Christ."

LOVE RATHER THAN LAWS

And now our third reason for saying "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever" is that he dealt with *love* rather than with *laws*. We in America have a Constitution which we regard as almost sacro-

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sanct. Yet it has been amended. And those first amendments we call the Bill of Rights and we look upon them with such reverence, especially since liberty is being so ruthlessly destroyed in other lands—one can think of situations where some of those rights might well be held temporarily, at least, in abeyance. For instance, we can imagine our country so swept by hysteria that the right of free assembly should be curtailed until the mob spirit passes. Or consider even some of our basic moral laws, such as, "Thou shalt not bear false witness." Doctors can make out a good case that in the sickroom the welfare of the patient sometimes requires that the truth be withheld.

If basic laws and rights should sometimes be repealed or held in abeyance, is there anything that can be regarded as an absolute never to be abrogated or interrupted? Paul Tillich, in a closely reasoned argument on "Ethics in a Changing World" at the University of Pennsylvania Bicentennial Conference, comes to this conclusion: "Love alone can transform itself according to the concrete demands of every individual and social situation without losing its eternity and dignity and unconditioned validity." There is no situation that calls for the repeal or suspension of love.

THE CHRISTIAN AND WAR

Take, for instance, the most tense issue of our times, that of the Christian's relation to war. No threat of war, no outrages on the part of hostile peoples, can repeal Christ's rule of love. If the individual feels that his motive of love can be expressed most effectively by helping to kill that some more may be saved, if he can conscientiously participate in the killing process without hating the persons attacked, if he is convinced that love has no alternative means of working its will, then for him it is his "Christian duty" to join in the war. On the other hand, if the individual feels that to speak of "killing in love" is a mockery; that Christ's absolute of love applies to the methods as well as the aims, since the means eventually determine the ends; that war wreaks more havoc to love than do the evils it seeks to remove; then for him his "Christian course" is to hold aloof from war. Each is thus testing his motives by the ethical absolute of love, and each must respect the right of the other to differ in love. We must make allowance for the limitations of our own judgment, for even the best of us, like Paul, see "through a glass darkly."

And when we look at Jesus Christ, we see the incarnation of the highest and most inexhaustible love we can conceive. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." And whom did Jesus include as friends? Not merely his own social circle, class or nation. He died for those who did not know him, for those who despised him, for all men out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. When we think of Calvary's dimensions as well as its direction, we behold Christ as the incarnation of love's last word. He is as absolute as love itself. For that reason we exclaim, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

Since Christ is our Eternal Contemporary, ever valid in his direction and motive, then "let us run with patience [steadiness] the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Our point now is that this attitude of keeping our eyes on the Christ gives steadiness in our running.

CHRIST STEADIES OUR DIRECTION

For one thing, the fastening of our gaze on the eternal Christ steadies our *direction.* A lesson which golfers must learn—and one, by the way, which this player has never learned—is to keep their eyes on the ball as they hit it. Beginners are prone to spoil their shots by looking up to see where the ball is going. Similarly, in life, when we strain too hard to foresee the consequences of our action, we lessen the force of the drive and are likely to divert its direction into mere expediency. The Christian must take his stand with

Christ in scorn of consequences to himself. Sometimes he must take his stand in scorn of consequences to others, trusting that when he fixes his position in line with the Light of the World, his shadow of influence will fall in the right place. If we go around always looking for the consequences of our conduct, we become afraid of our shadows. Furthermore, our finite wisdom cannot foresee or follow the full results of our deeds, for we work with a God who "hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise"; a God who "hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty"; yea, a God who "hath chosen the things which are not to bring to nought the things that are."

In the hands of a God who outdistances our wisdom and in the face of problems which baffle our reason, the Christian must get his moral bearings more and more from looking at his Lord and less and less from looking at the presumable social consequences of his course. In doing so he may be misunderstood and denounced by his contemporaries. But the testimony of experience is that the person who with his best intelligence and sincerest conscience takes his position in loyalty to Christ's absolute of love, has never proved thereby lacking in any other loyalty.

CHRIST INSPIRES PATIENCE

This attitude of "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" steadies our *pace* as well as our *direction.* It gives that patience with the processes of God which our machine culture has so largely lost. It slows down the staccato tempo of those who hurry so greedily to get the satisfactions of tomorrow because they are so uncertain how long they will last. Christopher Morley whimsically rebukes our rushing worldlings when he says:

> I who all my life had hurried
> Came to Peter's crowded gate,
> And as usual was worried
> Fearing that I might be late.
> So when I began to jostle
> (I forgot that I was dead),
> "Patience," smiled the old apostle,
> "Take your Eternity," he said.

Moreover, the sight of the Eternal Christ steadies our pace by relieving the pressure of the excessive "timeliness" which afflicts us. There is, to be sure, a timeliness essential to effective effort in any realm. The timing of shots is as important in the pulpit as in presidential fireside chats. Nevertheless, we have a tendency to exaggerate the uniqueness of current situations. In the words of "A. E.," the Irish poet, we need to turn from "the politics of time" to "the politics of eternity." "Looking unto Jesus," we are lifted above the low views of our time, and thereby are enabled to distinguish currents from eddies. We see, too, as Irwin Edman reminds us, that "in an important sense, nothing has been changed, though everything has been interrupted. One would not go on listening to Beethoven if one's house were afire, but the beauty of music remains no less beautiful because our listening to it must be postponed."

A young student was recently discussing her college major. She was considering art, but she felt that to

A Pastoral Prayer

1-18-42

By Burris Jenkins

ALMIGHTY God our Heavenly Father, we praise Thee for the brightness, the beauty, the radiance of this Lord's Day morning; and though clouds, dark and forbidding, hang over the world, we look up to Thee out of the perplexities of poor purblind humanity to see the radiance of our Savior in whose name we meet. Give us the faith to feel that he is still the Savior of the world and that he will lead us out of our vain ways into paths of sanity, of unity, of world order. We are conscious, deeply conscious, of our own frailties and shortcomings. Do Thou forgive us, good Lord; and what is more to the purpose, do Thou help us to forgive ourselves so that having resolved our inner conflicts we may with reunited minds and hearts, with clear and single vision, go forward to do our work in the world. Make us better men and women, gentler, kinder, more forbearing and more loving than we have ever been before. Make us God-conscious men and women that knowing that Thou art forever near we may pray without ceasing.

Send Thou Thy blessing and benediction upon all who are distressed in mind, body or estate, in hospital or home, and upon the many who with physical or mental handicap are struggling along at great odds to live their lives. Be with those sad and bereft, who have lost what is most precious to them out of life. Be with the aged whose steps are feeble and few. Be with the stranger within our gates or passing by, any lonely and sad. Send Thou Thy blessing upon the churches of our country and the earth—all churches, centers of light and hope in a dark world. Be with little children, young and impressionable, youths and maidens happy and expectant, with strong men and women battling the waves of life and meeting all kinds of obstacles and difficulties with courage and perseverance.

Send Thou Thy benediction upon the President of these United States and all who are in authority over us. Their task is heavy, their shoulders bowed, their burdens almost insupportable in these arduous times. Look in much mercy upon the premiers and those who sit in the seats of the mighty among all nations. Give them sanity and wisdom that they may put aside war, find peace and cooperation and brotherhood in all the earth. To this far-off end may we devote all our effort and all our lives in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

specialize on art in a time of world turmoil seemed a case of fiddling while Rome is burning. Perhaps she had better focus on social science. Whereupon her mother reminded her that the social science which she herself had studied in college a generation ago is now outmoded, while the art forms are as true as ever. Art values remain although museums may be bombed and the ownership of paintings may be changed by conquests. Yes, and it may be added that the basic elements of Christian social science remain despite wars and revolutions. No amount of regimentation or collectivism erases the fact that ultimately public welfare becomes actual in the private good of individuals. Reverence for personality and the redemptive power of love remain central to Christian democracy.

THE REDEMPTIVE PURPOSE OF GOD

The effort to adjust the eternal to the timely is fraught with danger. The divine program and schedule of redemption cannot be reduced to the scale of Russian Five-Year Plans or Nazi Four-Year Plans or American New Deal Plans or Atlantic Charters. Specific reforms may be compressed and speeded by time schedules. Let us not deny their value. But let us not mistake specific social reforms for the Kingdom of God. The church should give its aid to reforms but it should not give its gospel away to them. All our timely social programs are to be appraised and applied in the light of a divine plan: *the plan of the eternal God pursuing a redemptive purpose with an everlasting love working through the life and cross of an undying Personality.*

Furthermore, this "looking unto Jesus" our Eternal Contemporary not only steadies our *direction* and *pace* but it also sustains us with an *eternal present.* One element of strategy in successful living is to live each moment to the full, not lessening its energy and enjoyment by regret for the past or by anxiety for the future. Such was the Jesus way of life. Such is the mood often to be observed in unspoiled youth. To the boy immersed in a baseball game, the diamond is a little patch of heaven and the nine innings are a little block of eternity. He does not spoil that period of living by thinking of what went before or of what is to come after. This ability to crowd eternity into time is to be seen in the creative moments of artists and poets and scientists. In fact we all have some fleeting glimpses of eternal living, when time is forgotten. But how tragically we shut ourselves off from these windowsills of heaven by our imprisoning sense of time.

To vitalize the present and not to evade it, to live each day to the full and not to hurry through the hours on our way to a bliss beyond—that is the reason for, and the result of, bringing eternity into time. "This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," for he is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

If Christ Was Wrong

If Christ was wrong; if his way of life was a rainbow of idle promise; if never shall men be able to live on earth as the children of God; if always we must go on as we are until, if God pleases to do it, he chooses to make the world all different, then I for one would quit the church. Christianity is to me no philosophy of: We cannot do it but we must live *as if* we could. Unless we face whether we believe in Christ's way or no, we shall become like the man Robinson wrote about who "climbed a rainbow and hurt himself severely." We must first of all be honest in our faith, honest enough to say and act upon our saying.

But if Christ was wrong, the world is doomed. We must be honest, too, with the way we take if we say Christ was wrong. We are nearly blind; we see but dimly into the future if we cannot see the dead-end sign just beyond us on the road we then must travel if we believe that Christ was wrong. . . .

If Christ was wrong and the jungle laws are right, we get no beloved community in the end. If Christ was wrong, we quit him; but if he was wrong, what have we to go to? Allan Knight Chalmers.

The church ought to have a clear, distinctive word for this hour. What would Jesus say about war and peace? What does the New Testament say about brotherliness and human interest? Who is greatest of all? The servant, not the military genius. This is important. Now we must decide whether Christ was merely a dreamer, or whether his word is final for Christians. This is the very hour when it must be, for us and for the world, "Christ or chaos." For fifty years we have been choosing chaos. Perhaps we are tired of chaos and are willing to take Christ at his word.

John Ray Ewers.

The February Issue

will contain sermons by ministers who have graduated from the seminaries within the past five years, and who have been named by the heads of their seminaries as conspicuously successful as preachers and pastors.

The Preacher Problem article has been omitted this month to make room for the sermons by the ministers who have been voted by Pulpit readers as notably "effective preachers." But in the February issue will appear an article by William L. Stidger of Boston University on the theme, "Preaching Out of the Overflow."

Explaining his point of view, Dr. Stidger says: "My theory of preaching is that the great, unforgettable preachers of the English-speaking peoples of the past, and the contemporary preachers who attain any reputation of lasting greatness, are what I call 'overflow preachers': those who have such basic educational reserves, who live so largely, who read so widely, who have such an abundance or overflow of physical energy and of intellectual background and religious experience, that the sermons they preach flow up and out from inner deeps of power and content."

In the March issue will appear an article by Charles W. Gilkey on the theme, "Do Sermons Grow?"

Keep Your Pulpit Coming

Who's Who in This Issue

Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick *was* ordained in the Baptist ministry in 1903 and ministered at the first Baptist Church in Montclair, N. J., 1904-15. He was an instructor in homiletics at Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1908-15, and has been professor of practical theology there since 1915. He has ministered at Riverside Church, New York, for many years, and speaks to multitudes through his Sunday broadcasts. His latest book is entitled *Living Under Tension.*

Ordained in the Methodist ministry in 1910, Rev. Ernest Fremont Tittle was pastor of churches at Christiansburg, Dayton, Delaware and Columbus, in Ohio, and since 1918 has ministered at First Methodist Church, Evanston, Ill. Among his books are *We Need Religion, A World That Cannot be Shaken* and *Christians in an Unchristian Society.*

Rev. Paul E. Scherer *has been minister* of Holy Trinity Church (Lutheran), New York, since 1920 and has preached on the Sunday Vespers program of the National Broadcasting Company since 1932. He received his theological education at Mt. Airy Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Three years ago he published his widely read volume, *Facts That Undergird Life.*

The earlier pastorates of Rev. Albert Edward Day were in Bellefontaine, Cincinnati, Delaware and Canton, in Ohio, and at Christ Church, Pittsburgh. From 1932 to 1937 he ministered at Mt. Vernon Place Methodist Church, Baltimore, and since 1937 has led the activities of First Church, Pasadena, Cal. His latest book is entitled *The Faith We Live.*

Rev. Ralph W. Sockman *was associate* minister of Madison Avenue Methodist Church (now Christ Church) New York, 1915-17, and has been minister there since 1917. He has broadcast over a national chain for several years. He has published several books.

Ordained in 1915 as a minister of the Congregational Church, Rev. George A. Buttrick held pastorates in Quincy, Ill., and Rutland, Vt. In 1920 he went to First Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, and since 1927 has ministered at the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York. He has been president of the Federal Council of Churches and is the author of a number of books.

Rev. Burris Jenkins *has recently retired* from the pastorate of the famous Linwood Community Church, Kansas City, Mo., where he ministered for a generation.

Titles and Texts

'What was the most effective sermon you heard during the past year?'

Theodore C. Hume, Claremont Church, Claremont, Cal. "Dare We Pray for Victory?" Matt. 6:9, 13—"After this manner therefore pray ye . . . Thine is the kingdom and the power."

John R. Gosney, Second Presbyterian, Danville, Ky. "Footnote to Joy" Col. 4:18—"Remember, I am in prison." (Moffatt)

Charles F. Kemp, Christian Temple, Wellsville, N. Y. "Only the Brave Can Pray." Matt. 26:42—"Again a second time he went away, and prayed, saying, My Father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink it, thy will be done."

William J. Ohan, Bethany Presbyterian, Chicago, "Christian Propaganda." Matt. 28:19—"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
Title of sermon

. . . . . .
Text used (write out the text)

. . . . . .
Name of minister

. . . . . .
Name of church

. . . . . .
Address

Matthew C. Cavell, First Presbyterian, Evansville, Ind. "Shine Like Stars in a Dark World." Phil. 2:15—"In all that you do avoid grumbling and disputing, so as to be blameless and innocent, faultless children of God in a crooked and perverse generation where you shine like stars in a dark world."

Clarence E. Macartney, First Presbyterian, Pittsburgh, Pa. "Each by the Other's Faith." Rom. 1:12—"that is, that I with you may be comforted in you, each by the other's faith, both yours and mine."

J. Calvin Reid, First Presbyterian, Columbus, Ga. "Strengthening the Home Bases of Democracy." I Peter 2:17—"Honor all men. Love the brotherhood."

T. Benton Peery, St. Matthew's Lutheran, Philadelphia, Pa. "Priority in Spiritual Defense." Matt. 6:33—"But seek ye first his Kingdom, and his righteousness."

Edwin T. Jones, Third Reformed, Albany, N. Y. "Looking Backward into the Future." II Tim. 3:7, 8—"I have fought . . . henceforth." (New Year's sermon)

Deane W. Irish, Methodist, Dodgeville, Wis. "Lighting a Candle in the Darkness." John 1:5—"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overpowered it." (Weymouth)

Francis E. Vipond, Francis, Sask., Can. "People Who Make a Difference." II Cor. 5:17—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

Bishop James C. Baker, San Francisco, Cal. "Sympathy in a War-torn World." Rom. 12:10—"have full sympathy with one another."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE UNITED STATES is caught in the toils of war. This time it is a total world war. It came to us by way of the Far East, in an hour when we were not expecting it, though it had become almost a proverb among us that when and if this country went overtly into the war it would be by the Pacific back door. Negotiations were in progress at Washington between Japanese envoys and our department of state, ostensibly seeking a way to prevent war. Our government had formally stated its demands a full week before, and while awaiting Japan's reply the President had addressed an appeal to the emperor himself, hoping thus to go over the heads of the military clique which surrounds that pathetically august personage. No reply was received. Finally, on Sunday, December 7, the official reply to the statement of terms was presented to Secretary Hull. But one hour before its delivery, the Japanese had already struck. The attack, accompanied by a declaration of war upon us, unified the nation instantly and war was declared by Congress the next day in response to the President's solemn request. Followed quickly a declaration of war upon the United States by Germany and Italy, which Congress answered by declaring war on them. Thus all the great powers of the world are now divided into two warring camps. With Russia and Britain engaging Germany and her allies on the longest battle line known to history, with the British Empire, America, China and the Netherlands engaged in defending the Far East against Japan, and with Great Britain locked in daily battle with German and Italian forces in North Africa and poised to meet a German attack upon her island home, the modern world has at last come to its Armageddon.

Armageddon At Last!

The Book of the Month

RELIGION AND THE WORLD OF TOMORROW. *By Walter W. Van Kirk. Willett, Clark & Co., $1.50.*

ALMOST simultaneously with America's entrance into war, appeared this book which looks beyond the war to the reconstruction of the world. In its opening chapter the author unfurls a banner bearing this confident inscription: "There will be a World of Tomorrow!" "Not once but many times," he says, "dictators have laughed at God. . . . Everywhere, even as bombs destroy and guns lay waste, men are thinking and dreaming about the shape of things to come." Dr. Van Kirk carries this dream in his heart. Every page is radiant with a light from afar. But it is no dream book, no fanciful picture of the future. It is a dream implemented with the means for its realization. The author proves himself to be a Christian statesman of the first order. His 150 pages are divided into three chapters, each one of which penetrates with hard-headed realism to the actualities of the world situation and lays foundations for the future. Consider these chapter headings: The Political Foundations, The Economic Foundations, The Spiritual Foundations—for the World of Tomorrow. Every chapter is pervaded by the ideals and imperatives of the Christian faith. No kind of writing is more difficult than to bring Christian faith and economic fact, for example, together on the same page. When one writes economics, one easily forgets Christianity; and when one writes Christianity, one easily forgets economics. Van Kirk never forgets either. He holds them together. I consider this the most valuable book I have read which looks toward the future of the world in terms which take full account of the causes of our present plight and relates the Christian faith to the whole world scene.

A Thought for the Month

LET US try to think of the war as tragedy. For America, and for Americans, that is what this war is. When we say tragedy we do not refer to the suffering, the killing or the dying that go with war, though we loosely use the word to express our horror at such things. The essence of tragedy lies in our human involvement in a situation from which there is no escape save by doing monstrous evil. A tragic situation is one in which man has lost his freedom to choose between right and wrong alternatives. Yet he must act. But his act is predetermined by the iron law of necessity. Our country is now in such a situation. In the years before the war, we were free. We could choose the road which led to war or the road which led to justice. The nation chose the road which led inevitably to war. And having done so, we are no longer free to propose alternatives—there is no alternative. There is no alternative for the nation, and there is no alternative for the citizen. The nation must fight. And the citizen must fight—or let some other citizen fight for him. He cannot escape his implication in his country's solidarity when his country's existence is at stake. It is not a question of right and wrong. Questions of right and wrong presuppose moral freedom—freedom to choose between alternatives. But the moral question is no longer open. America is no longer free. You and I are no longer free. We are bound. We have been bound by our own acts, by our blindness, by our national selfishness, by our statesmen's lack of imagination, by our unwillingness to trust in God, that is, to trust in and constructively and sacrificially cooperate with the pacific processes of justice. To be thus bound is tragedy. It is the starkest form of tragedy. It is fate, inexorable fate, whose web has been woven chiefly by human hands.

The War as Tragedy

Charles Clayton Morrison

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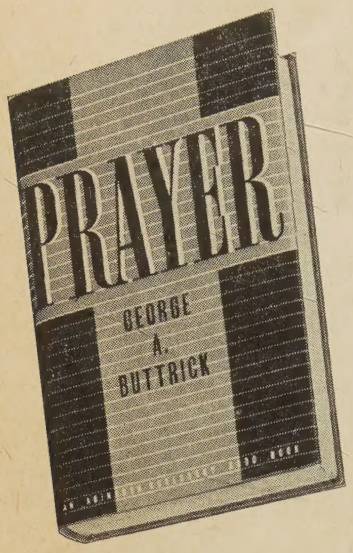

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